

REVIEW OF THE FY 2008 MENTAL HEALTH BLOCK GRANT PLAN

THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

A multistep process was used to complete the consultative peer review of the Louisiana Mental Health Block Grant for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008. Three members of the Southeast Region Review Panel individually reviewed plans and application materials submitted by the State and the Mental Health Planning Council (MHPC). Those reviewers then discussed their individual findings with other Panel members and consolidated their comments, requests for additional information, or potential modifications to the plan. The State and the MHPC then met with the Review Panel to review the plans and application.

The review was opened by the State and MHPC providing an overview of the status of Louisiana's mental health system. During the consultative review process, the Review Panel, the State and MHPC discussed areas of strengths and challenges in the plan concerning key mental health issues in Louisiana.

This document is a synthesis of the oral and written presentations of the State's designees and MHPC's representatives, oral and written presentations of the members of the Review Panel, and the responses of the State's designees and MHPC designees to questions posed by Review Panel members. Where recommended by the Panel, this document also contains a list of modifications to the plan to be completed in collaboration with the State's Project Officer.

The Louisiana review was for an application and plan submitted for FY 2008. It was conducted as an open review on November 28, 2007.

STATUS OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

The Mental Health Authority in the State of Louisiana is the Office of Mental Health, located in the Department of Health and Hospitals. The Office of Mental Health is responsible for planning, developing, operating, and evaluating public mental health services for the State. Other agencies in the Department of Health and Hospitals include the Office of Public Health, the Office for Addictive Disorders, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, the Office of Management and Finance (which includes the State Medicaid Authority), and the Office of Aging and Adult Services. Office of Mental Health services are targeted to adults with a severe mental illness, children and adolescents with a serious emotional or behavioral disorder, and all people experiencing an acute mental illness.

Recent legislation has mandated that the administration of the Louisiana mental health care system change from interrelated Areas and Regions to a system of independent health care districts or authorities, known as Local Governing Entities under the general administration of the Office of Mental Health. The transition is expected to be complete by 2010. The change will be significant: In the past, Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) and State hospital programs were all operated by State civil servants with direct line of authority from the Office of Mental Health central office. The Local Governing Entities are mandated as the local umbrella

agencies to administer State-funded mental health, addictive disorder and developmental disability services in an integrated system within their localities. It is anticipated the Local Governing Entities will enable greater accountability and responsiveness to local communities, since it is based on local control and local authority.

A representative of the State Mental Health Authority told the Peer Consultative Review Panel that the New Freedom Commission report has been the guidance for transforming the mental health system in Louisiana. He said that the principles of recovery and resiliency took on new meaning in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Those events helped provide opportunity to redesign the mental health system and improve delivery of services.

Transformation planning has involved more than 13 agencies and community forums with involvement from a broad range of stakeholders. The planning created “Louisiana’s Plan for Access to Mental Health Care,” with six overarching goals. The State’s representative said those goals include an increase in the use of evidence-based practices, a continuum of crisis services, effective services for children, the integration of primary health care and mental health services, individualized supportive services, and a redefinition of the leadership role of the Office of Mental Health.

Funding has been approved for 100 acute-care psychiatric beds, four Mental Health Emergency Room Extension programs, 10 mobile crisis Teams, 10 crisis respite programs, and a mental health and developmental disabilities unit at a State-operated hospital. A new Office of Client, Youth, and Family Affairs has been created.

The State’s representative told the Review Panel that the Mental Health Authority would use a “Cornerstone Model” to focus on recovery and resiliency, use management, credentialing and privileging, and performance improvement. The Panel was also provided a list of specific programs supported by the Block Grant.

Louisiana did not provide data for Table 4. The State responded in the plan and application that the current accounting and bookkeeping system used by the State does not make it possible to accurately complete the table. The Peer Consultative Review Panel was informed that it could have been completed, but the information provided would have been subjective.

The State of Louisiana included a response to all nine National Outcome Measures and identified and reported on several State-specific performance measures. Data were not included for all measures, but the State included an action plan to collect and report the information.

MHPC

Approved

The representative of the State MHPC told the Peer Consultative Review Panel that the Council has undergone several recent structural changes, which increased efficiency and effectiveness. She said the Council had a strong collaborative relationship with the Mental Health Authority.

The MHPC is supportive of the State's efforts at mental health system transformation. In addition to reviewing the Block Grant plan and application, the Council is responsible for public education, education of Council members, and development of Regional Advisory Councils. Each of the Local Governing Entities must have and support a Regional Advisory Council that has an organizational relationship to the MHPC. In addition, the Council and Block Grant funds support the activities of the Mental Health Reform Coalition. The Coalition is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization focusing on issues relevant to adults with mental illness and children with serious emotional or behavioral disorders.

Members of the MHPC participate in allocating, monitoring, and accounting of Block Grant funds.

REVIEW OF THE ADULT PLAN

The capacity for mental health service delivery within Louisiana continues to recover from the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Three clinics in the New Orleans area remain closed as a result of storm damage. There are 40 CMHCs and 24 Outreach Clinics operating in the State. CMHCs provide crisis services, screening and assessment, individual evaluation and treatment, psychopharmacology, clinical casework, and specialized services for children and youth. Some centers provide specialized services for individuals in the criminal justice system and for persons with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse issues.

The Office of Mental Health provides additional community-based services directly or through contractual arrangements. These services include supported living, supported employment, family and consumer support services, and school-based mental health services. The Office of Mental Health and the Local Governing Entities have more than 100 contracts with private agencies to provide services. The Mental Health Authority also operates as a managed care agency of the State Medicaid agency to authorize and monitor quality and outcomes for mental health rehabilitation services operated through private Medicaid provider agencies statewide.

Louisiana has four State-operated inpatient psychiatric hospitals. One hospital includes a division solely designated for the treatment of forensic patients. There are also eight facilities operated by the Louisiana State University Medical Schools for acute psychiatric inpatient care. Some inpatient beds were lost due to hurricane damage. The State has plans for replacing those beds, but the demand for this level of care currently exceeds capacity.

The Mental Health Authority supports consumer and family involvement in planning, development, delivery, and evaluation of services. Funding is provided for regional consumer drop-in centers, psychosocial clubhouses, and regional consumer liaisons. Consumers and family members are also trained as service evaluators.

Criterion 1: Comprehensive Community-Based System of Care

Approved

The Peer Consultative Review Panel remarked that the State of Louisiana provided a comprehensive description of its mental health system for adults with serious mental illness and its efforts to recover from the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It was noted that the State is using its recovery efforts as an opportunity for mental health system transformation.

Outpatient mental health services have historically been provided in Louisiana through a network of 43 licensed CMHCs and their 16 satellite clinics. In addition to an array of services, the centers serve as a single point of entry for inpatient care. Mental health centers also contract for certain services, such as Assertive Community Treatment, consumer drop-in centers, and case management. Crisis services are available 24 hours a day and include telephone counseling and referrals, face-to-face screening and assessment, community housing for stabilization, and crisis respite services.

The Office of Mental Health provides management for the Mental Health Rehabilitation Program, which is reimbursed by Medicaid. Core improvements to this program have included the development of best practices, new eligibility criteria, and a fee-for-service reimbursement model. Services available through this resource include community workers who assure coordination of care and access to services and skills training to assist with socialization and adaptation skills. Also available are group psychosocial skills training, counseling, and medication management.

The Office of Mental Health has used Employment Specialist training and other training available through the University of North Texas and the Federal Region VI Community Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program to build a corps of Employment Coordinators in each region of the State. A total of 659 consumers were served in FY 2007 by Employment Coordinators, with about 250 entering employment.

The Mental Health Authority used General Funds to provide housing and support services. Additional funding was obtained to develop housing support services for 600 individuals and 24-hour residential care beds for 100 people. The State continues to pursue housing resources through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding streams such as Continuum of Care, Section 811, and Section 8 programs. Regional Housing Coordinators are active participants in regional housing coalitions and often leaders in the coalitions.

The Office of Consumer Affairs in Louisiana was reorganized as the Office of Client, Youth, and Family Affairs to develop more inclusive services for persons affected by mental health issues in the State. The full-time director of this office is a consumer. The Office of Client, Youth, and Family Affairs works for development of peer support programs, resource or drop-in centers, coordination of a statewide advocacy network, and other initiatives which encourage consumer and family choice in treatment and supports.

The Office of Mental Health supports a variety of activities to aid consumers and their families. These include financial and technical support to consumer and family organizations, self-help educational groups, and employment of consumers to assist other consumers to access services. The Mental Health Authority also makes available flexible funds that families and consumers may use to address barriers to care and recovery.

A grant from the Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services provides funds to develop a framework for a system of personal assistant services for individuals with psychiatric disabilities. This included the development of a curriculum in which a core team of consumers were trained to provide education to personal care attendants and providers.

Criterion 2: Mental Health System Data Epidemiology

Approved

Federal estimates indicate 71,294 adults in Louisiana have a serious mental illness. The State reports that 25,297 adults meeting the definition of serious mental illness were served in FY 2005 and projects serving 25,300 in FY 2008.

Criterion 3: Children's Services

Not applicable in the Adult Plan.

Criterion 4: Targeted Services to Rural, Homeless, and Older Adult Populations

Approved

Housing and homelessness continue to be impacted by the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita two years after the events. Areas of Louisiana most directly hit by the storms were the areas that traditionally have the highest rates of homelessness and the highest numbers of people with mental illness. Housing recovery efforts for affordable housing continue despite barriers including changes in development costs at all levels and local resistance to affordable housing development.

The Federal Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) grant in Louisiana targets outreach and support services for individuals with serious mental illness or with serious mental illness and co-occurring disorders. More than 3,900 individuals were served by providers receiving PATH funds. The State estimates there are 11,146 individuals in Louisiana who are homeless and have a serious mental illness or serious mental illness and co-occurring disorder.

Louisiana reports that 56 of its 64 parishes (counties) meet a definition of "rural." There is an Office of Mental Health mental health center or satellite clinic in 45 of these 56 rural parishes and a mental health rehabilitation provider in most of them. Although these programs exist, transportation continues to restrict access to services. The lack of transportation also restricts access to employment and educational opportunities, resulting in increased social isolation of

many consumers. The Office of Mental Health continues to seek to expand the number of mental health programs and additional transportation providers in these areas.

Teleconferencing has alleviated some of the access problems. The Office of Mental Health has teleconferencing capacity at 46 sites. Teleconferencing is used for physician and consumer sessions, training, and meetings.

The Department of Health and Hospitals recently appointed an Assistant Secretary to lead the newly formed Office of Aging and Adult Services. The Office of Mental Health is collaborating with this new office in efforts to serve older Louisianans. Several community-based programs and services report activities directed to older adults, including a collaboration with Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers to serve older adults with serious mental illness, nursing staff specifically assigned to a geriatric caseload, geriatric inpatient psychiatric units, a geriatric day program, and collaborations with Senior Citizens Centers, Council on Aging, home health agencies, and Meals on Wheels.

Criterion 5: Management Services

Approved

The State of Louisiana includes detailed information on total expenditures and expenditures of the Block Grant in its plan and application. Block Grant funds are used to support innovative programs and services which help address service gaps and need throughout the State. The Office of Mental Health budget for FY 2008 was \$322,882,926, of which \$84,962,138 was for community-based services.

Information is provided in the plan and application to describe staffing for the Mental Health Authority and community-based mental health services. A comprehensive description of training and education is also provided.

In addition to collaborations and training concerning disaster response, several law enforcement agencies have received Crisis Intervention training to provide information and skill development in contacts with people with mental illness. Training on mental health issues is provided by Office of Mental Health staff to the Coroner's Task Force members.

The Office of Mental Health provides staff for all State-administered hospital emergency rooms. The staff performs mental health screening as a part of the admission process. The Office of Mental Health also coordinates in-service training for emergency room doctors, nurses, and others and trains teachers and school administrators in disaster response procedures.

FY 2008 ADULT PLAN
SUMMARY CHECKLIST
STATE: LOUISIANA

CRITERION	APPROVED	MODIFICATION RECOMMENDED
1	X	
2	X	
3	N/A	
4	X	
5	X	

REVIEWER'S RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED AS WRITTEN: X

APPROVED WITH WRITTEN MODIFICATION: _____

STATE: LOUISIANA

LIST OF MODIFICATIONS TO ADULT PLAN:

STATE DESIGNEE: _____ (*Signature on file*) _____ DATE:

MHPC DESIGNEE: _____ (*Signature on file*) _____ DATE:

If written modifications are required, please send to:

LouEllen Rice
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Division of Grants Management, OPS
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One Choke Cherry Road
Rockville, MD 20857

REVIEW OF THE CHILD PLAN

Community-based mental health services for children with serious emotional disturbance are provided in Louisiana through a network of more than 40 CMHCs and 16 satellite clinics. These facilities provide an array of services.

A Federal Social Service Block Grant awarded following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita enabled expansion of contract services, such as school-based mental health services, juvenile diversion programs, expanded crisis services, afterschool programs, mentoring programs, and wraparound services. The CMHCs serve as the single point of entry for admission to State-operated inpatient services for children and adolescents.

Crisis services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Social Services Block Grant, combined with State General funds, has enabled development and implementation of the Child and Adolescent Response Team. This comprehensive model of crisis services guarantees a face-to-face assessment within 2 hours of contact if deemed necessary.

The Office of Mental Health manages the State's Mental Health Rehabilitation program through a memorandum of agreement with the State's Medicaid Office. Services available include assessment, community support, group psychosocial skills training, counseling, medication management, and parent-family intervention. The parent-family intervention service provides intensive home-based services to assist in maintaining children at risk of out-of-home placement.

Criterion 1: Comprehensive Community-Based System of Care

Approved

In addition to basic mental health services, crisis services, and mental health rehabilitation services, the Office of Mental Health and its community-based providers offer transition and employment services, alternative living arrangements for children and youth who are in need of that service, and services to children with serious emotional disturbance and co-occurring substance abuse issues. The plan and application includes a provider-specific list of activities designed to assist the transition of youth in adult services and self-sufficiency.

The Office of Mental Health collaborates with and provides assistance to more than 50 School-Based Health Centers. Services provided include short-term psychoeducation group sessions; educational groups for faculty, staff, and parents on topics such as stress management, crisis intervention, trauma, grief, and loss; short-term treatment services for children referred by staff; and referrals to more intensive mental health services when needed.

The Office of Mental Health supports a variety of activities which aid children & adolescents and their families. Activities include providing financial and technical assistance to consumer and family organizations and self-help educational programs and support groups that are organized and managed by family members. Organizations supported include the Federation of Families, Families Helping Families, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness – Louisiana.

The Office of Mental Health also employs parents of children with emotional or behavioral disorders as family liaisons. These employees assist other family members in assessing services and provide education, advocacy, and supportive activities.

Families may also access flexible funds to address barriers to care, recovery, or resiliency. Consumer Care Resources may be used to pay for utility bills, clothing, food, or unanticipated expenditures such as car repairs.

Criterion 2: Mental Health System Data Epidemiology

Approved

The Review Panel found all necessary information for this criterion. The State indicated a prevalence rate of 85,223 children and adolescents in Louisiana with a serious emotional disturbance. It is estimated that 3,600 children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance will be served in FY 2008.

Criterion 3: Children's Services

Approved

The State of Louisiana provides a detailed discussion of the services available to children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral disorders. Local Office of Mental Health clinical staff expedites access to emergency and evaluative mental health services for referrals from School-Based Health Center social work staff. The School-Based Health Centers provide in-school mental health counseling for students and parents if they are not eligible for early mental health intervention in Office of Mental Health clinics.

The Office of Mental Health collaborates with the Nurse Family Partnership Program in which nurses provide in-home services to pregnant women at risk and their infants through the first 24 months of the child's life. Office of Mental Health staff are trained extensively in developmental theory and assist Office of Public Health nurses in providing health and mental health services to mothers and their young children.

The Office of Mental Health, the Office of Developmental Disabilities, Medicaid, and the Bureau of Community Supports are included in a Memorandum of Understanding to provide wraparound Medicaid waiver supports and services to youth with co-occurring mental illness and developmental disability.

The Early Childhood Supports and Services (ECSS) program is a multiagency prevention and intervention program for children from birth through 5 years of age and their families who have been identified as at risk for developing, social, emotional, or developmental challenges. Local networks include the Office of Mental Health, the Department of Social Services, the Office of Family Services, Head Start, Early Head Start, local school systems, the Department of Education, the Office of Public Health, the Office of Addictive Disorders, and the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. Elements of the ECSS program include local systems

of care for young children, early identification and intervention, healthy brain development, and school readiness.

Criterion 4: Targeted Services to Rural and Homeless Populations

Approved

Louisiana has a number of programs and services for children, adolescents, and families who are homeless. Each Region or Local Governing Entity has a Homeless Coalition, which addresses system issues and coordinates services for people who are homeless. Services range from outreach services to placement in permanent housing. Individuals, including children and adolescents, may receive shelter and substance abuse and mental health services.

Services targeted specifically to children, youth, and their families who are homeless have been limited. The State reports several activities throughout the Louisiana that will increase services to children and adolescents who are homeless and their families. The Office of Mental Health works in collaboration with the agencies and organizations planning and delivering these services.

Telemedicine, telenetworking, and teleconferencing throughout Louisiana have improved access to mental health services in rural areas of the State. More than 85 percent of Louisiana's parishes are classified as "rural."

Criterion 5: Management Systems

Approved

The State of Louisiana provided all information necessary for this Criterion. Information was provided on staffing for the Mental Health Authority and local providers of community-based services, and training of staff. The State provided a comprehensive report on training for first responders.

FY 2008 CHILD PLAN
SUMMARY CHECKLIST
STATE: LOUISIANA

CRITERION	APPROVED	MODIFICATION RECOMMENDED
1	X	
2	X	
3	X	
4	X	
5	X	

REVIEWER'S RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED AS WRITTEN: X

APPROVED WITH WRITTEN MODIFICATION:

STATE: LOUISIANA

LIST OF MODIFICATIONS TO CHILD PLAN:

STATE DESIGNEE: _____ (*Signature on file*) _____ DATE:

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